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SUBJECT: HONDURAS RECEPTIVE TO CASH COURIER INITIATIVE

REF: SECSTATE 161166

¶1. Econoff delivered reftel demarche November 29 to Ambassador Roberto Ramos Bustos, head of the office of Special Affairs at the Honduran Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ramos was enthusiastic about the U.S. proposal and said Honduras shares the U.S. and G-8 concerns about cash smuggling and other forms of illicit financing transfers. Ramos promised to pass the white paper to the Honduran Ambassador to the OAS, Carlos Sosa Coello, and will encourage the Honduran delegation at the March CICTE meeting to support the Global Strategy Against Cash Couriers and incorporate elements of the initiative into the Honduran proposal. Ramos underscored Honduras is committed to upholding its international treaty obligations on illicit financing and terrorist financing, pointing to the Palermo Treaty on Organized Crime, and other UN agreements. He noted that Honduras is attempting to reform its money laundering law to conform more closely to international standards, as well as criminalize terrorist financing.

¶2. Post also passed an informational copy of the white paper to the Minister Armando Saramiento, head of the Honduran Tax Authority. Saramiento oversees the Honduran Customs Authority, which would largely be responsible for implementation of the initiative once it is adopted.

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